

however, if the EPA does not act as arbiter to hold States accountable for pollution upstream. Therefore, I was particularly pleased to see that the agricultural community widely supports Mr. Regan's nomination.

Both the global effort to combat climate change and the regional Chesapeake Bay restoration effort are enormously challenging. Yet the prospect of confirming Michael Regan to be the Administrator of an EPA that produces policy based on Scientific evidence and robust community input has me hopeful that we can sustain a healthy, vibrant watershed and Nation for generations to come.

VOTE ON REGAN NOMINATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote that was set for 5:23 begins right now.

I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Will the Senate advise and consent to the Regan nomination?

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 66, nays 34, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 116 Ex.]

YEAS—66

Baldwin	Hassan	Portman
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Romney
Booker	Hirono	Rosen
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Brown	Kaine	Rubio
Burr	Kelly	Sanders
Cantwell	King	Schatz
Cardin	Klobuchar	Schumer
Carper	Leahy	Shaheen
Casey	Lee	Sinema
Collins	Lujan	Smith
Coons	Manchin	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Markey	Tester
Cramer	Menendez	Tillis
Duckworth	Merkley	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murkowski	Warner
Feinstein	Murphy	Warnock
Fischer	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Graham	Padilla	Wicker
Grassley	Peters	Wyden

NAYS—34

Barrasso	Hagerty	Risch
Blackburn	Hawley	Sasse
Blunt	Hoeven	Scott (FL)
Boozman	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Capito	Johnson	Shelby
Cassidy	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lummis	Toomey
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Cruz	McConnell	Young
Daines	Moran	
Ernst	Paul	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the Regan nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, let me explain to the public and the

Senators what we are doing here. In the bipartisan agreement we faced under a 50–50 Senate, the rules say that if there were a tie vote, the majority leader has the ability to discharge the nomination from committee and then there be a vote on the floor.

In this case, the nomination of Xavier Becerra to be Secretary of Health and Human Services, there was a tie vote in the Finance Committee. And what I will be doing in a moment is invoking that rule so that there can be 4 hours of debate on the motion, equally divided, and we will debate whether Becerra should be approved. Obviously, he only needs approval with 50 or 51 votes if the Vice President comes to break the tie.

I will say a brief word here. It is confounding to me that Mr. Becerra, Xavier Becerra, did not get some votes from the other side of the aisle. He is an eminently qualified member. He was an outstanding Member of Congress. He was a very good Attorney General, and he has led the charge to keep people's healthcare. When he was Attorney General, he was involved in the lawsuits of those who wanted to repeal the ACA. And if that is the reason our Republican colleagues are objecting—because he wants to keep and preserve the Affordable Care Act, which is very popular with the American people and very needed—I am surprised. It is yesterday's news.

I know in 2010 a lot of people came here, "Repeal ACA," but as the public got to know the ACA, they saw how good it was. And there is not much groundswell out there, except among some, the hard right, to repeal it. So I am surprised. And then we heard: Well, he is not a doctor. I would remind my colleagues that the last nominee for HHS they supported was a drug company executive. Are our Republican friends saying they would rather have a drug company executive who was not a doctor either than somebody who has been a very careful, smart attorney who has been fighting for people to get better healthcare? I am surprised.

So I hope that we may get a few of our colleagues to join us tomorrow and vote for Mr. Becerra. I don't think it will serve the country well or the Republicans well to be so adamantly opposed to him. But let me now proceed.

MOTION TO DISCHARGE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, pursuant to S. Res. 27, the Committee on Finance, being tied on the question of reporting, I move to discharge the Senate Finance Committee from further consideration of the nomination of Xavier Becerra, of California, to be Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the provisions of S. Res. 27, there will now be up to 4 hours of debate on the motion, equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with no motions, points of order, or amendments in order.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, we expect a vote on the motion to discharge to occur at approximately 12 noon on Thursday, March 11, 2021.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO BRAD RICHARDSON

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, it was one decade ago that my friend Brad Richardson saw an opportunity in Hardin County. The community was ready to step on the gas pedal and start a new era of growth. It had the raw materials: a dynamic workforce, a premium location, and a strong ally in Fort Knox. All it needed was the right person to lead the way. Today, I would like to pay tribute to Brad, a visionary leader who helped realize the area's potential. At the end of this month, he will begin a well-deserved retirement with our sincere thanks.

The first step was bringing everyone together. Brad is a natural team builder. He oversaw the consolidation of four local business advocacy groups into the Hardin County Chamber of Commerce. The new organization would help attract investment to one of Kentucky's most populous counties. As the chamber's inaugural president, Brad spent the next decade doing just that.

One of Brad's first moves at the new Hardin Chamber was to restart the annual Small Business Expo. The event gives local entrepreneurs the opportunities to connect with customers and local leaders as they expand their operations. Brad also launched a Buy Local campaign to keep Hardin County's dollars in the community. In 2014, he was named the Chamber Executive of the Year by the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Executives.

Hardin County is more than a great place to live and work. It is also the proud home to Fort Knox, one of Kentucky's premier military installations and the location of the U.S. bullion depository. The installation supports over 20,000 local jobs and makes a multibillion dollar annual economic impact. In 2016, Brad was a driving force in the establishment of the Knox Regional Development Alliance. The group is tasked with promoting the relationship between the community and our Armed Forces. For his work to encourage the partnership, Brad was given the Fort Knox Gold Neighbor Award.

I've worked closely with Brad and KRDA to invest in Fort Knox's infrastructure and capabilities. Last year,

that hard work paid off. The Pentagon selected Fort Knox to host the reactivated V Corps headquarters. Kentucky is one of the most military-friendly States in the country, and Hardin County was eager to welcome more than 600 additional soldiers. I am grateful to KRDA, Brad and his team, and our many other partners who made the stationing of the V Corps at Fort Knox a reality.

Over the years, Brad increased chamber membership and made substantial innovations for his community and our Commonwealth. That record of accomplishment would be enough for anyone. But Brad was determined to bring his good humor and enthusiasm to every project. He made it a real pleasure to be part of his team. When Brad took this job, he set an ambitious goal to enhance the quality of life in Hardin County. By any objective standard, I think he succeeded.

So we are all going to miss working with Brad at the Hardin County Chamber of Commerce. Along with his colleagues and friends, I extend my best wishes for a fulfilling retirement. On behalf of the Senate, I would like to congratulate Brad on all of his success and to thank him for many years of leadership in Kentucky.

NOTICE OF A TIE VOTE UNDER S. RES. 27

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print the following letter in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

To the Secretary of the Senate:

PN116, the nomination of Rohit Chopra, of the District of Columbia, to be Director, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection for a term of five years, having been referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee with a quorum present, has voted on the nomination as follows—

1. On the question of reporting the nomination favorably with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed 12 ayes to 12 noes; and

In accordance with section 3, paragraph (1)(A) of S. Res. 27 of the 117th Congress, I hereby give notice that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs has not reported the nomination because of a tie vote and ask that this notice be printed in the Record pursuant to the Resolution.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to submit for the RECORD a letter sent to the U.S. Senate from Cathy and Bill Schreiber of Wilson, WY.

I recently had the opportunity to visit with Bill. He shared with me his optimism for the future of our Nation and his belief that the “worst of the pandemic is behind us.”

In their letter, Cathy and Bill expressed support for helping those most

impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Like many people, they felt assistance should be targeted to only those individuals truly impacted by the pandemic. They offered sincere, honest options to make sure the relief got in the hands of those who need it, while limiting the financial strains additional debt spending will create for our Nation.

Cathy and Bill asked that I share their letter with the Senate. It expresses their confidence in the future and their compassion for others who continue to be adversely impacted by the current pandemic. I ask unanimous consent that their letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MARCH 3, 2021.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS: I want to start by thanking you all for the hard work you have all performed over the last year dealing with the COVID 19 pandemic. The economic relief and stimulus bills that you have passed starting last March have made all the difference in the world! Without this support from the federal government I believe the country would have descended into the greatest depression the country has ever experienced. And that would negatively effect the world economy.

As indicated by the amazing rebound in the stock market, it is clear that the current economic slow down is a health problem, not a systemic economic problem. I live and work in a small resort in northwest Wyoming and our community was hit very hard early last year. But now the economy is strong again and the unemployment rate is less than 4%! That means over 90% of the workforce is working. With the number of vaccines being administered now close to two million doses a day and vaccine availability ramping up very quickly, I believe the worst of the pandemic is behind us.

So now it is time to focus on the people who got hit hard by COVID. And there are millions. I see that the Senate is reducing the income eligibility for stimulus checks and I believe that is a good thing. I hope it can focus the \$1,400 payments to an even higher degree to the people that need them. This will help the bill be more bipartisan which will set the tone for future legislation! This is SO important right now.

It appears to me that my wife and I will qualify for the full \$2,800 stimulus check based on our income from 2019. But we would not qualify based on our 2020 income. We do not need the stimulus check. The check we received last spring we gave to people we knew who had lost their jobs. We will do the same thing again if we do receive a check, but we would much rather see less money borrowed by the U.S. government than giving money to the millions of workers that have not been financially effected by the pandemic. I would like you all to compromise a little and consider the following.

Treat the stimulus checks received in 2021 as ordinary income. This way folks that have made great financial gains over the last year will give some back to the U.S. treasury.

Restrict who gets checks based on net worth. Pick a number. I understand this is difficult to determine but it can be done.

Have state and local governments provide revenue statements for the last 24 months to see which ones really needs help. The county I live in does not need any financial help in

my opinion. A 5% reduction in revenue is not the end of the world. It is even healthy in my opinion.

Keep some extra “gunpowder” for some more future support for the unemployed for later this year and 2022.

Start to discuss how the government is going to pay this money back. These trillion-dollar sums become meaningless after a while. If the taxpayers of this county were to pay 10 million dollars a day towards this new debt, it would take 530 years to pay it off! And that amount does not even account for any interest.

And last, please remove funding for special projects and put them in a separate piece of legislation.

I know that fundamentally all Senators basically want the same near-term result. The pandemic to be behind us and that all Americans who have been hit hard by it be helped through the next year or two. I believe the economy is going to come roaring back very soon. It will be different but strong.

I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

CATHY AND BILL SCHREIBER,
Wilson, Wyoming.

P.S. Please reduce the proposed stimulus bill by \$2,800 on our behalf.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:17 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1276. An act to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish COVID-19 vaccines to certain individuals, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1319) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of S. Con. Res. 5.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 4:05 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 1319. An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of S. Con. Res. 5.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. SCHUMER).

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-603. A communication from the Director of the Regulations Management Division, Rural Utilities Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Rural eConnectivity Program” (RIN0572-AC51) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 5, 2021; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-604. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the continuation of the national emergency that